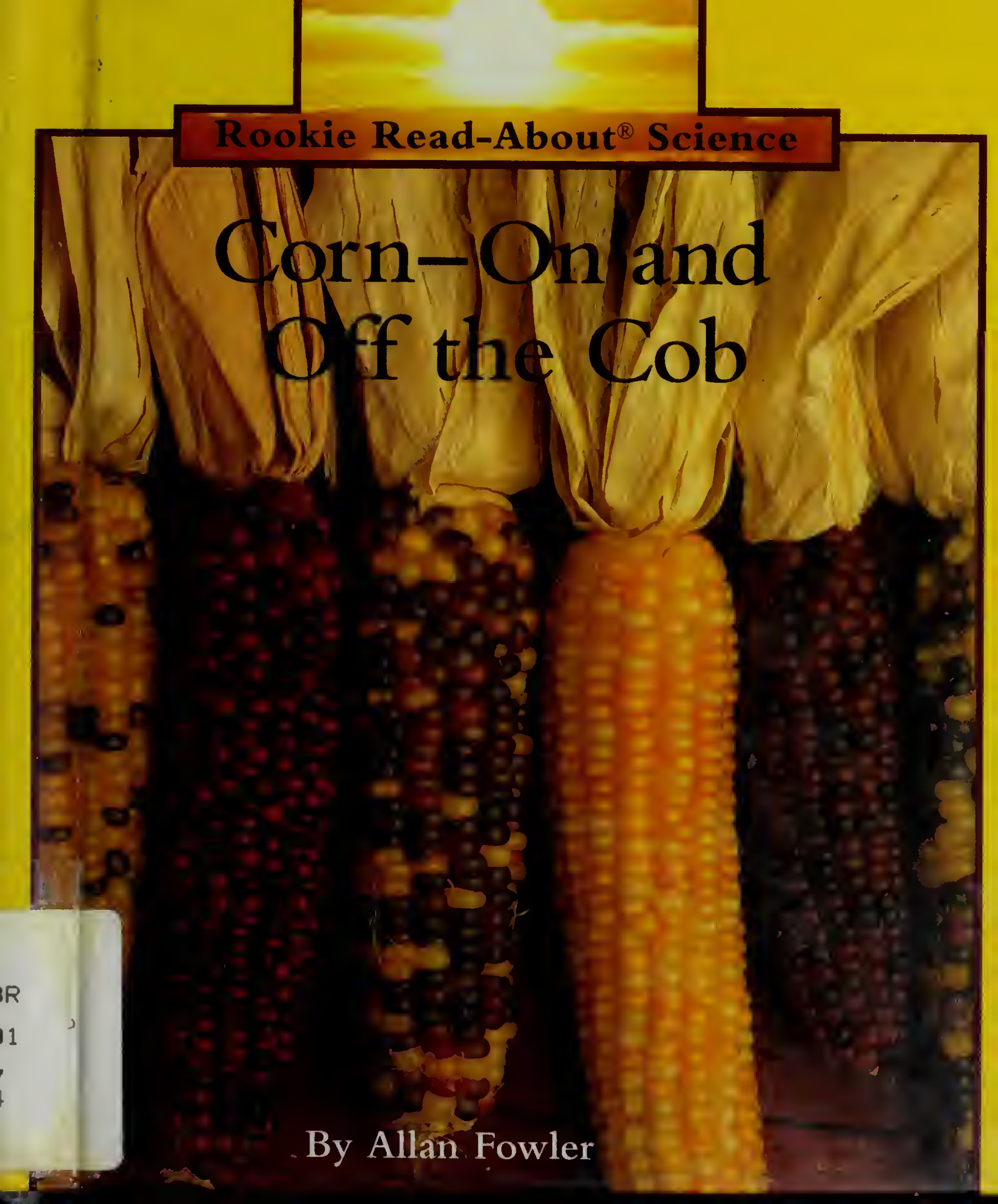
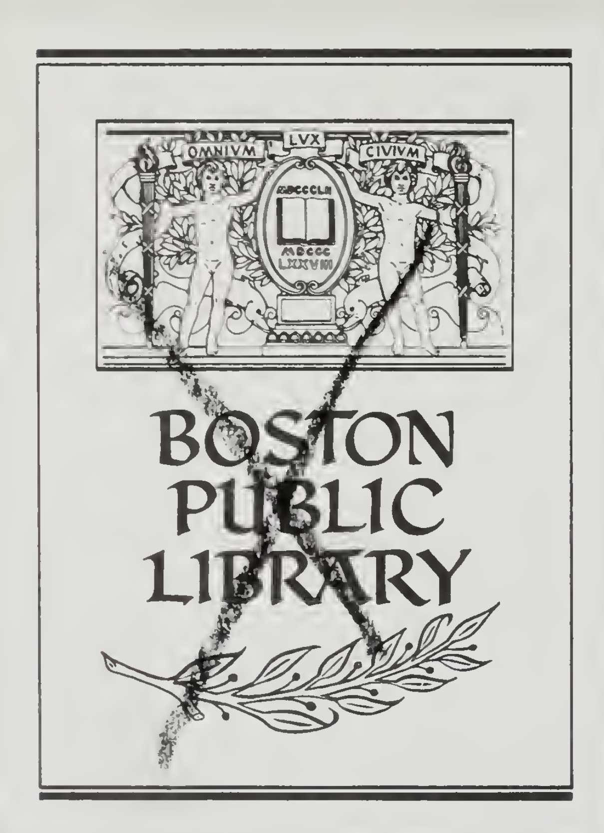
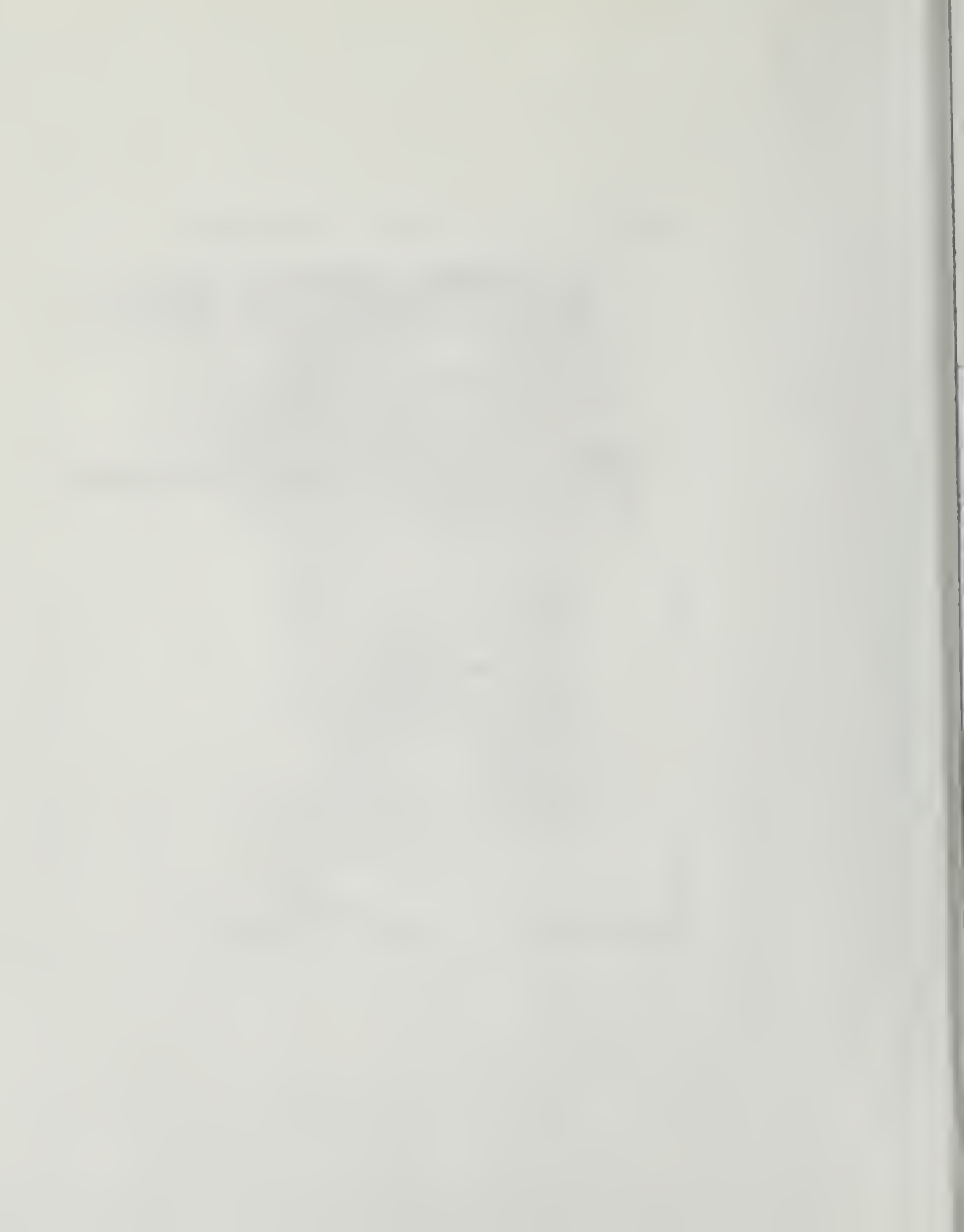

Rookie Read-About® Science
Corn—On and Off the Cob
By Allan Fowler


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Corn – On and Off the Cob

By Allan Fowler

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What food is grown on more American farms than any other?

Apples? No.
Potatoes? No.
Corn? Yes!



Most of that corn is not
eaten by people.

Farm animals eat a lot
of corn.

The corn that hogs, cattle,
and poultry eat is called
field corn.

The kind that you eat
is sweet corn.

Corn on the cob, fresh
from the farm, is one
way to enjoy it.





But kernels are also taken off the cob. They are canned or frozen, so you can have corn any time of the year.

One special kind of corn pops when you heat it. I'm sure you know what that kind is called!



There are many other ways to eat corn.

You might eat succotash. That is a mixture of corn and lima beans.





Corn is ground into cornmeal, which is used to make corn bread and corn muffins, tacos and tortillas.

And don't forget cornflakes.



You often eat corn without knowing it. Jam and jelly, candy and soda pop may contain corn syrup or corn sugar.





If these foods make your fingers sticky, you may wash your hands with soap that contains corn oil.

American Indians were
the first people to raise
corn. They called it
maize. We often call
it Indian corn.



The Indians taught
the Pilgrims and other
settlers from Europe
how to grow corn.

Corn plants belong to the same family of plants as grass.

Grasses that are used for food — corn and rice, oats and barley, wheat and buckwheat — are known as cereal grains.



A cornstalk usually grows to be at least 7 feet tall. Cornstalks in some places might grow as tall as 20 feet.





On top of each stalk is a tassel. One, or sometimes two, ears of corn grow on each stalk.

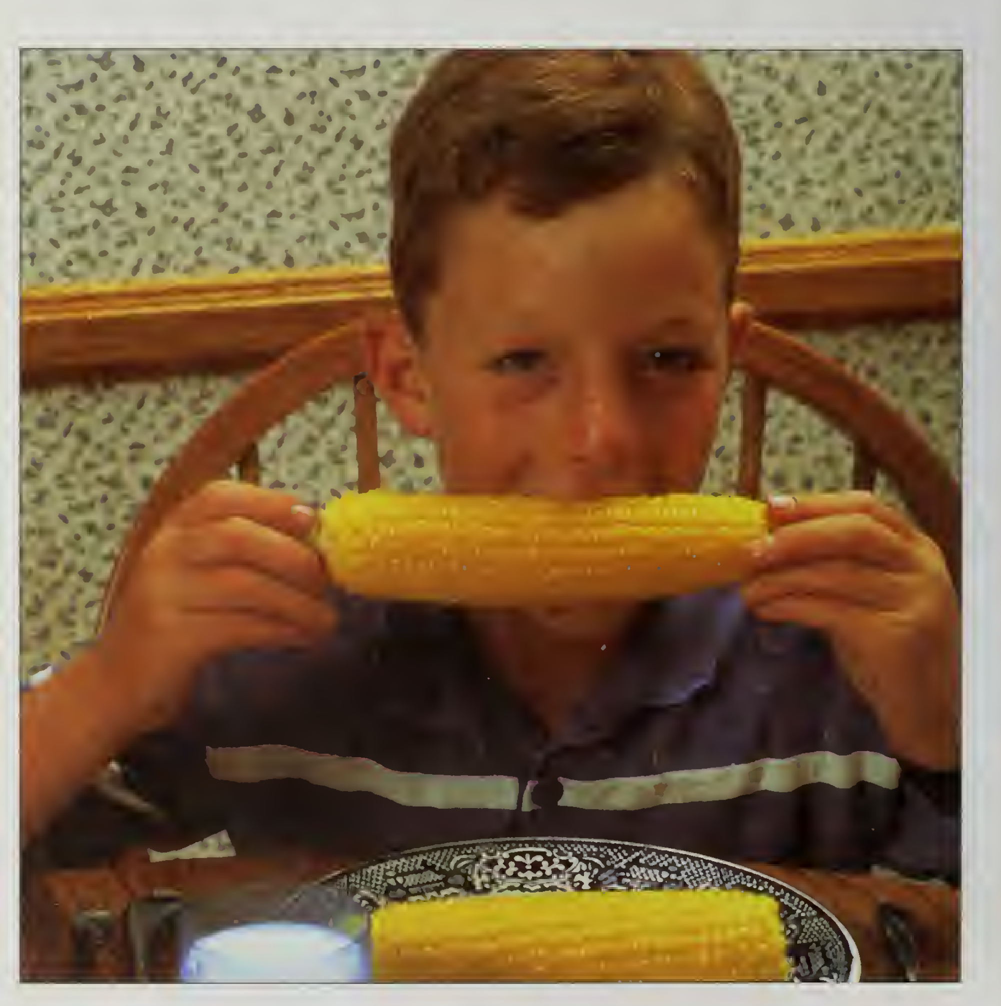


The ears are covered by
husks. Under the husks
are cobs. The cobs are
covered with row after
row of kernels.

The silky threads on the ears of corn are called corn silk.



Most of the corn we eat has yellow kernels.





But corn can also be white, red, brown, purple — or even have different colors on the same cob.



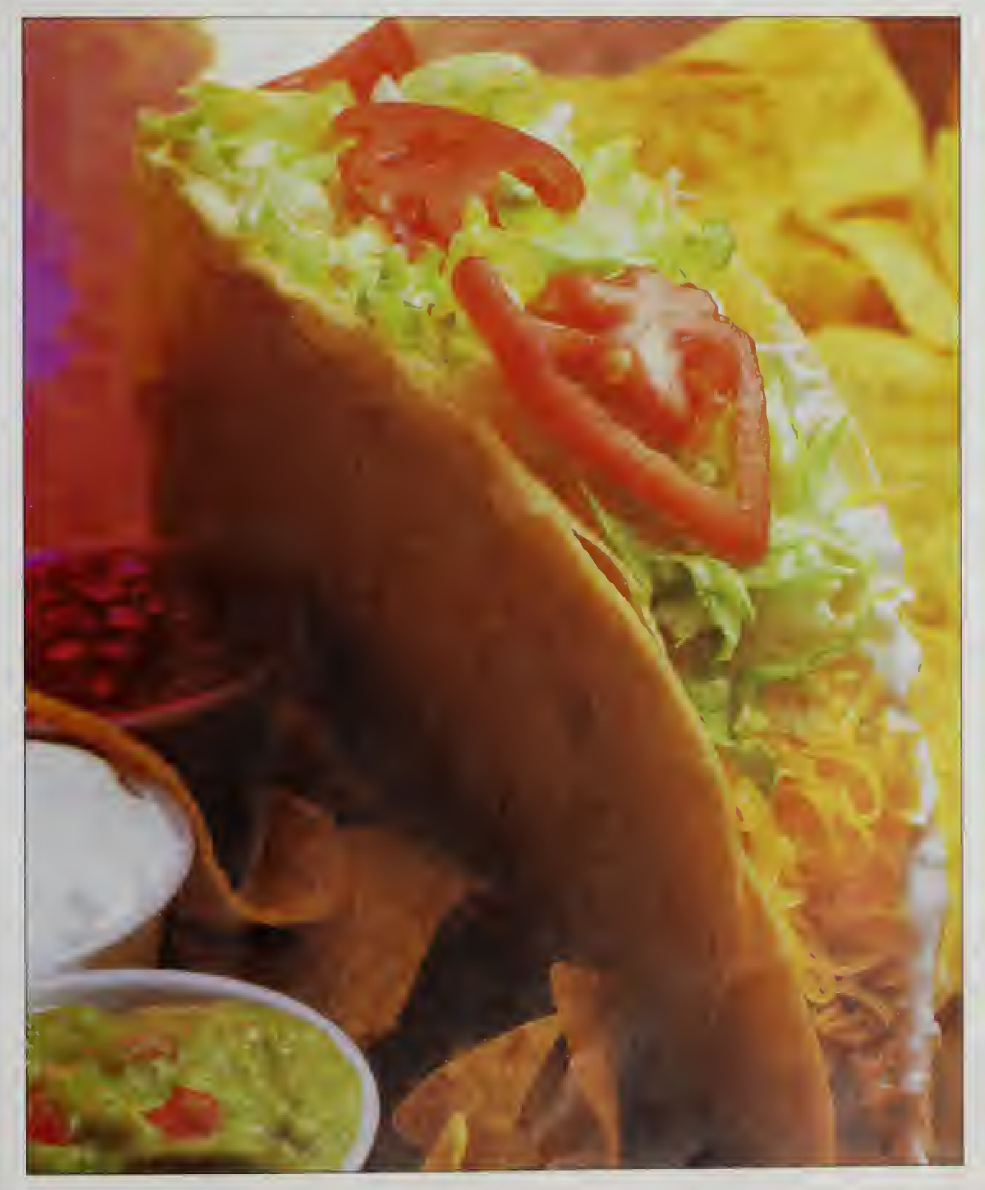
Farm families used to gather for a party while removing the husks from the ears. They called these parties husking bees.

Today, machines are used to plant, harvest, and husk corn. Machines make it even easier to grow and enjoy corn.



Corn on the cob, popcorn,
creamed corn, cornflakes,
tortillas, tacos . . .

What is your favorite way
to eat corn?



Words You Know

corn



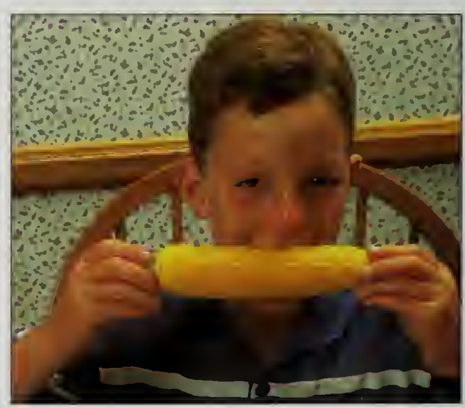
cornstalk



Indian corn (maize)



popcorn



corn on the cob



tassel

corn silk

husk

kernels

tortillas

cornflakes

succotash

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About the Author

Allan Fowler is a free-lance writer with a background in advertising. Born in New York, he lives in Chicago now and enjoys traveling.

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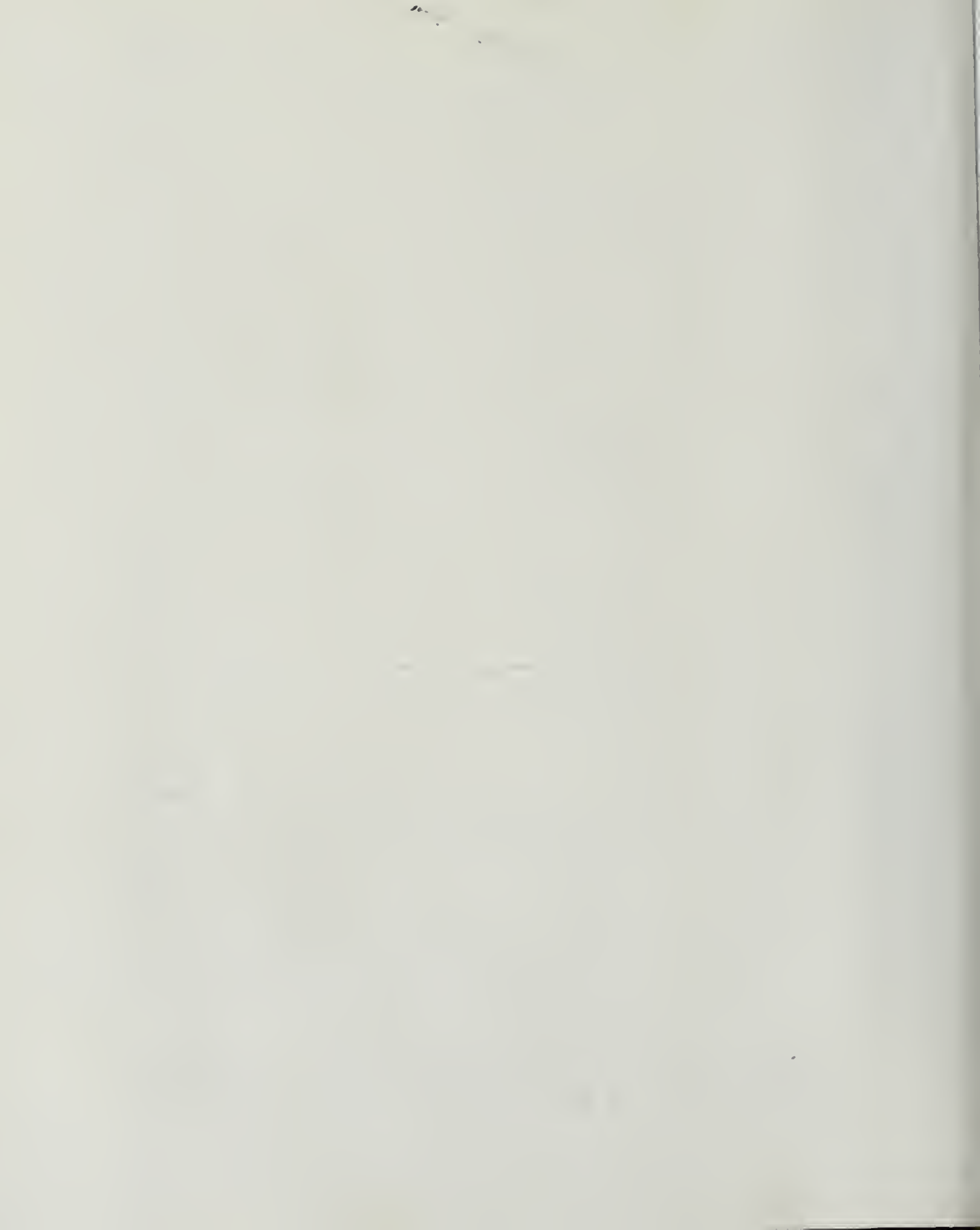
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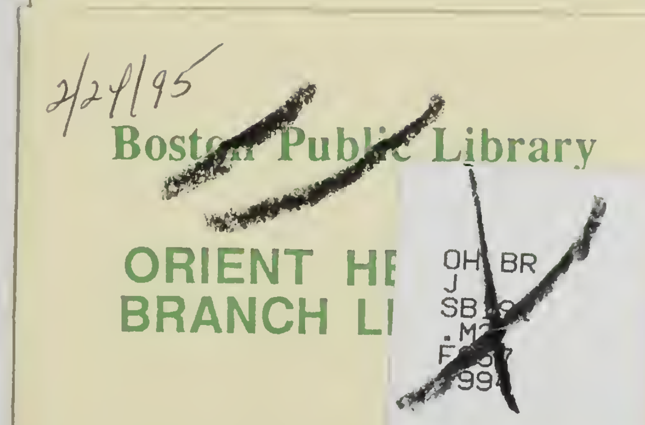
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All Along the River
Apples of Your Eye
Corn–On and Off the Cob
Cubs and Colts and Calves and Kittens
Feeling Things
Flies are Fascinating
Frogs and Toads and Tadpoles, Too
Gentle Gorillas and Other Apes
Hearing Things
Horses, Horses, Horses
Hot and Cold
How Do You Know It's Fall?
How Do You Know It's Spring?
How Do You Know It's Summer?
How Do You Know It's Winter?
If It Weren't for Farmers
It Could Still Be a Bird
It Could Still Be a Butterfly
It Could Still Be a Cat
It Could Still Be a Dinosaur
It Could Still Be a Dog
It Could Still Be a Fish
It Could Still Be a Leaf
It Could Still Be a Mammal
It Could Still Be a Rock
It Could Still Be a Tree
It Could Still Be Water
It's a Good Thing There Are Insects
It's Best to Leave a Snake Alone
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Please Don't Feed the Bears
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We Love Fruit!
What's the Weather Today?
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When You Look Up at the Moon
Woolly Sheep and Hungry Goats



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